

Approved X

Interagency Human Trafficking Task Force
Meeting Minutes for Victim Services Subcommittee
Monday, September 10, 2012

Convened at 10:00 am

Members present: Stephanie Decandia, Cherie Jimenez, Audrey Porter, Julie Dahlstrom, Tom King, Joe McKown, Katia Santiago-Taylor

Additional (presenting) participants: Steven Precopio, Liam Lowney

Staff Present: Nikki Antonucci

Welcome

Members introduced themselves.

June Meeting Minutes Approved

Vote to approve the May meeting minutes without changes. Motion made and seconded.

Completion of Presentation Regarding Men/Boys by Steven Precopio

Steven provided an overview of his research regarding the vulnerability of men and boys to trafficking. He described current gaps in social welfare systems and stressed the need to effectively identify men and boys at risk.

Steven addressed the following issues:

- Need to develop programs for adolescent males involved in commercial sexual exploitation (CSE);
- He is collaborating with Justice Resource Institute to hire a survivor mentor and start a prevention group for men and boys;
- He conducted a focus group to get a good sense of needs. Wide variety of needs but access to housing is a large barrier to success. He noted that many men/boys have a history of homelessness and impossible to focus on other issues without access to a home, food, and basic necessities.
- Boys in his study were twelve years old and older. It is difficult to identify young men due to the stigma of being involved in the sex trade. Often, boys are identified as trouble makers or involved in the criminal justice system because their abuse may manifest in signs of aggression.
- Only 33% of men interviewed identified as homosexual.
- Steven recognized a great need to provide services as youth age out of programs and supportive services. The lack of services often push men/boys into the sex trade (or back into the sex trade) to engage in survival sex.

Data Collection Committee Intake Questions

Deborah Bercovitch presented the draft intake questions from the Data Collection Subcommittee for comment from the Victim Services Subcommittee. The subcommittee discussed the content of the questions, suggested additional questions to add, and made recommendations regarding training to be received by individuals conducting intake within government and social service agencies.

The Subcommittee discussed:

- Purpose of intake is to identify victims, get information to maintain statistics, and make appropriate referrals. It is intended to be used by health care professionals, law enforcement, and victim services providers.
- Importance of asking for the survivor's story and not only asking a list of questions. This could be built into training for individuals conducting screening. If trust is not built with potential survivors, they may

not be willing to disclose exploitation. Need to use strength-based language to frame questions in order to make survivor comfortable.

- Potential additional questions about use of immigration status and working conditions. Request to make referrals to services regardless of answers to questions because survivors may be more comfortable disclosing to service providers.
- It is more important to recognize how victims are being approached when asked questions. Training Subcommittee is designing the approach to address how questions should be asked.
- Additional feedback can be provided directly to Deb Bercovitch. The subcommittee welcomes input and will provide victim service providers with an updated intake list when complete.

Review of Presentation to Task Force and Recommendations

We discussed the recent presentation to the Task Force and the desire to present concrete recommendations in May. Members suggested that we create a Victim Services Survey for completion by members about their selective areas of expertise (e.g., adults, children, labor, sex, etc.). The surveys will be completed by October 3rd, and the results will be presented in the next meeting. The survey will evaluate what current programs exist to serve this need, what model programs are present, existing gaps in services, and recommendations to be made. Additionally, the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance and Joe McKown from Strategic Grant Partners will present regarding funding options for trafficking programs in Massachusetts.

Next Steps:

- Surveys due on October 3rd;
- Email Needs Assessments to Julie as soon as possible;
- Next monthly meeting on Tuesday, October 9, 2012, at 10 a.m. at the Family Justice Center;
- Members should notify Julie in advance if cannot make the meeting to ensure that we have a quorum.

Adjourned at 12:00 pm

List of Documents and Exhibits Used by Subcommittee

Meeting Notice/ Agenda

Draft Intake Questions

Next meeting: October 9th at 10 a.m. at FJC

Minutes submitted by: Blair-Victoria Dutra, Julie Dahlstrom